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Statement submitted by Manavata, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08605 (E) 180615

Please recycle

Statement

This paper focuses on environmental sustainability, Millennium Development Goal 7, and Manavata's experience and results in transitioning it to a sustainable goal and makes five recommendations.

Manavata is born with the vision of creating sustainable development at the levels of individual, society and environment. As such a successful transition of Millennium Development Goal 7 is central to Manavata's mission. Manavata has successfully implemented a farming system called 'Zero Budget Natural Farming', pioneered by eminent agriculturist Subhash Palekar, and thus sees its critical relevance to environmental sustainability. Manavata has experientially found this system making a profound impact on the successful transition of other Millennium Development Goals as well, especially 1, 2, 4, and 5, to sustainable ones, due to their inter-relationships in Indian society.

The excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides for agriculture has devastated the soil biota, including earthworms, which is the lifeline of a sustainable soil ecosystem. In 2012, 13754 Indian farmers, unable to generate any healthy crops, and with debts mounting, resorted to suicide, in spite of investing heavily on fertilizers and pesticides. Zero Budget Natural Farming, the name itself implying zero production costs, takes away the traditional emphasis on investments in pesticides etc. to utilizing naturally available resources. It is based on the principle of allowing a group of plants to grow in a natural ecosystem thus ensuring required amount of sunlight, shade and nutrients in the soil. In 2014, our farm gave a rice yield of 2.17 tons/acre, with a savings of over $180/acre. Manavata has set up a farmer knowledge centre where farmers are trained freely on this farming system including soil preparation, preparing natural manure from cow dung and performing pest control using leaves of neem tree and other medicinal plants.

In order to shape this mission into a self-managed one and to make the goal's transition sustainable in the long term, Manavata is developing leaders among farmers. The challenges Manavata is working to overcome are training resources, consistency in methods and acceptance.

Based on our credible experience, as evidenced by the local State Government's recognition, we recommend the following:

(a) Educate the wider farming communities on the ease of implementation and benefits of sustainable methods like Zero Budget Natural Farming.

(b) Encourage Governments to develop indicators for soil biota and pesticide content and provide suitable incentives for continuous improvements on those, driven by environmentally sustainable methods.

(c) Recommend businesses to procure produce delivered by farms using environmentally sustainable practices.

(d) Act as a catalyst for further adoption of natural farming methods, by sharing those successes across the non-governmental organization network.

(e) Help develop local leaders to drive the transition of Millennium goals to sustainable goals.

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Statement submitted by Commonwealth Association of Surveying and Land Economy, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

Our website (casle.org) gives some background to our activities in the promotion and dissemination of good practice in the management of built and natural resources, including marine environments. Implicit in these activities are our exchanges of information on good practice in the education of professionals and in their lifelong professional development, by means of technical conferences, seminars and publications.

Our discussions in the light of such activities led us to conclude that there is a need to examine the statement describing each Millennium Development Goal and to identify tasks which Surveyors could undertake based on existing skills. This also suggests that we need to identify those professional skills, which could be readily extended to less usual professional work.

Surveyors work in relatively small consultancy practices, or in large units in industry, or local/central government agencies. Much professional work is done for clients who pay a fee, and who are unlikely to fund work outside of their immediate interests. This suggests that progress in developing sustainable development goals from Millennium Development Goals is most likely to be made by providing specific funding by Governments to research groups in industry and universities.

Specifically, it will require national and international planning, publicity and funding to achieve progress.

We suggest that areas such as the following need to be addressed as part of the transition to sustainable development goals:

(a) The role of land law, cadastral surveying, and related practices in generating secure land tenure systems in developing economies, in order to provide a basis for investment in land and marine environments, such as in the agriculture, water, mineral extraction, energy production, and development industries.

(b) The role of the construction and development sectors in national economies in producing sustainable land and construction activity, in order to produce economical and hygienic infrastructure, whilst generating employment for people.

(c) The use, redesign and refurbishment of existing buildings and infrastructure in order to improve living conditions and reduce disease.

(d) The funding and promotion of general and higher education to enable poorer people and women to enter the professions, simultaneously encouraging interest and participation in beneficial technology.

(e) Improving information and communication technologies to spread knowledge and technological improvements to geographical areas currently considered to be uneconomic in location, size and/or scale.

(f) Research in order to clarify the means of achieving sustainability in different physical and economic environments, and to provide data to underpin the dissemination of information.

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Statement submitted by Stat-View Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

In order to have different, more equitable development outcomes, we need to have a different development process with more equitable input and decision-making. "Participatory monitoring and accountability" is a process for bringing community members — especially those who are poor, socially excluded or politically marginalized — into monitoring and decision-making for development. Citizen monitoring is needed in addition to technical data collection, because citizens have an integrated or holistic perspective on what is working and what isn't. Marginalized communities are especially important to this process because they are the ones most in need of development, and thus are the target population of many development goals and programs.

In order for participatory monitoring to be a meaningful process, however, there also need to be accessible and effective mechanisms by which ordinary people can hold their governments and international bodies accountable for commitments on development. The feedback gathered during the monitoring process needs to be brought forward in an effective way that highlights successes and failures, and allows governments and international agencies to see what changes people require. This need for accountability applies to the rich countries as well as to those countries that are striving to develop their economies. Rich and influential countries have perhaps the greatest obligation in the development process, both to ensure that their activities do not cause harm in the globalized economy and in conflict zones, and to support the beneficial development efforts of the other countries.

Our Initiative for Equality network is working through partnering civil society organizations conducting "Field Hearings" in more than 85 countries. We are taking input from marginalized communities, and using this information to support effective accountability mechanisms at the local, national, regional and international levels. To scale up and make this a truly global process in the post-2015 era, we are forming an alliance with several other networks having similar commitments and activities. Together, we will reach nearly every nation on earth, and bring marginalized citizens into the global dialogue on development. We focus on the full range of development issues, including social, economic and political equalities, poverty eradication, migration, conflict, sustainability, climate change and disaster reduction. Our networks will work together to support and engage in citizen monitoring and accountability processes related to all these development issues, and to how we can achieve the new sustainable development goals. By bringing community members into this participatory process, we will help to ensure that the transformative potential of the new goals can be realized.

Stat View International is a non-profit organization that provides research on social issues in Guinea. We are a member of the global network called Initiative for Equality, and are writing on behalf of both organizations.

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Statement submitted by Global Forum on Human Settlements, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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Please recycle

Statement

Urbanization and urban development is at the crossroads where we are increasingly witnessing a series of social problems emerge in different forms and scales. To get the upper hand in this unprecedentedly complicated urban battle, we must take immediate and substantial measures and actions towards a truly sustainable low-carbon city. As embedded in the initiative for International Green Model City launched by us which aims to guide the development of green low-carbon city pilots, a sustainable city must be able to stand the test of three pillars of sustainable development: economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability and social equity. Where, however, are we going to find the solutions? The International Green Model City has 12 principles at its core, including Net zero carbon, Zero waste, Sustainable environment, Green planning and design, Green transportation and linkage, Green infrastructure, Green building, Green economy, Green living, Harmonious society, Sustainable culture and heritage and Smart community. We have no way out of this intangible web of crises but rebuild, renovate and reform our cities by adopting the aforementioned 12 overarching principles, in particular in developing areas and regions, to eventually realize green, low-carbon, and sustainable cities for the following actions need to be taken, urgently:

(a) More attention should be devoted to the small and medium cities where more financial support, institutional willingness and technical knowhow are in dire need to unlock the huge potential of economic growth, employment generation and ecological construction.

(b) In the fast urbanizing world, particularly, housing has become the dominant indicator of measuring the well-being of people, while the young, the underprivileged, and the marginalized residing in cities are among the most vulnerable groups. We must step up effort implementing a package of programs (youth development scheme, home improvement projects, and the like) targeting these disadvantaged regardless of regions.

(c) Making the city planning and design right and scientific from the start is the ultimate solution to urban transportation issue, high energy consumption, air pollution and social segregation.

(d) We must empower people, foster participation and enable cooperative networks towards sustainable cities and sustainable urbanization.

(e) We must protect environmental goods and services, ecosystems, agricultural soil, promote efficiency and sustainability in the use of urban land, ensuring participation and inclusion of citizens in land use planning.

(f) We must enable continuous improvement on cities based on accountability, transparency, and good governance, to ensure the greater benefit for the greater good.

(g) We need to promote the localization of the sustainable development goals, targets and indicators, which will allow a successful implementation of the post-2015 agenda at a local level.

(h) Public-private partnerships can help to finance, build, operate and maintain infrastructure and public transport services in a cost-efficient way.

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Statement submitted by United Cities and Local Governments, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

1. Lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals have galvanized political commitment, influenced debate, provided a focus for advocacy and improved the monitoring of development projects. But the assessment of the Millennium Development Goals has repeatedly shown that, in many domains, the poorest and the most marginalized are often passed over.

The Millennium Development Goals have also been criticized with regard to a deficient ownership, a simplistic vision of development, problems with equity and an emphasis on ends to the exclusion of means. Part of the failure to address inequalities in the Millennium Development Goals has been related to the lack of attention to urban dynamics, when more than half of humanity is now living in urban areas and poverty is increasingly urbanized.

The Millennium Development Goals failed to address some issues, in particular linked to population dynamics, as growing urbanization. The only target in the Millennium Development Goals which refers to the urban situation is the significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers (by 2020). The numbers have been met but without reducing slum populations as they have continued to grow. This is especially significant for local and regional governments in view of their leading role in the governance of urban areas in many countries.

Even if most of the Millennium Development Goals depend directly or indirectly on the capacity of local and regional governments to deliver services, their involvement in implementing the Millennium Development Goals remains under-recognized and under-supported. Since the drafting of the Millennium Development Goals, the world has transformed from predominantly rural to more than 50% urban. Furthermore multiple crises have emerged, environmental with raising climate change impacts and disasters, economic and financial challenging existing social models.

The new development agenda needs to be rooted in the needs of people at the local level (a bottom-up process) through an iterative process involving regular and inclusive participation of all stakeholders.

2. Build on the Millennium Development Goals and "finish the job"

It will be important that the new framework not be articulated in terms of partial achievements. Targets should support universal access to basic needs, and promote zero exposure to the worst forms of risk and hazards.

The new agenda should not be based only on economic growth but also on sustainable social, environmental and cultural development objectives; the agenda should be supported by universal rights, promote the wellbeing of the people and take into account new actors of development. Poverty and sustainability needs to be tackled with a multi-dimensional approach, building synergies between different goals and targets, both in the developed and developing world, promoting a high degree of policy coherence at the global, national but also sub-national levels, defining shared responsibilities and a more balanced approach among all levels of government and development partners.

Concrete but flexible goals, promoting inter-sector and territorial development approaches. The global framework should be flexible enough to allow for

adjustments according to regional, national and local needs. Policies addressing poverty/inequalities, and economic and environment sustainability need to develop cross-cutting approaches, anchored in specific territories (e.g. a region, a city, a neighbourhood) where marginalized groups and extreme poverty are concentrated. There is strong evidence from many nations that local approaches have a central role in reducing inequalities, giving voice to the poor and most vulnerable and promoting more sustainable patterns of development.

Identify the how and who (drivers and enablers). A number of critics feel the Millennium Development Goals do not go far enough in identifying approaches for achieving the ends. Although some Millennium Development Goals targets are as much about means as ends, the overall emphasis is clearly on the "what" more than the "how" or the "who".

The new framework should build on the Rio+20 outcome document that recognised the need for effective governance at local and sub-national levels in advancing sustainable development. The involvement of sub-national institutions and actors cannot be limited to implementing actions; they should be active partners in defining policies, planning, implementing and monitoring.

3. Content of the Post-2015 agenda

Criteria to set targets and indicators under the 17 Goals: simple, jargon-free and easy to communicate and understand; energising to people, institutions and governments; mutually supportive; ambitious but achievable; applicable in diverse conditions and countries (but flexible to be adapted at the country level).

Concerns with data: The framework of the goals tends to encourage a focus on national averages, and the United Nations task team acknowledges that progress has not been well monitored at sub-national levels. There is a widely recognized need for disaggregated statistics to identify the most disadvantaged, and to monitor progress on goals and targets.

A new goal on sustainable cities: if cities host 50% of the world population and this will soon increase to 2/3, leading the United Nations Secretary-General to say that "Our Struggle for Global Sustainability Will Be Won or Lost in Cities", the post-2015 agenda should define more specific targets and indicators for urban areas. More sustainable cities will be crucial to develop more balanced links with hinterlands. A cross-sector approach in urban areas should include: reducing inequalities (including gender inequalities, universal access to basic services, improving the quality of life of slum dwellers), environmental sustainability (transport, building standards, renewable energy, carbon gas emissions), safe cities (living without fear of violence) and improved governance (participation of the population, with specific attention to the poor, in local governance, strengthened capacity of local authorities to lead pro-poor policies, including participative strategic planning).

Reduction of inequalities: as hunger and nutrition is one of the more critical dimensions of inequalities, ensure food security needs to be at the top of the agenda in eradicating extreme poverty. Universal access to basic services (health, quality education, drinkable water, sanitation, emergency services, public transports) and social protection with special attention to specific groups (extreme poor, children, single women heads of households, older people, persons with disabilities), are also at the core of reducing poverty and exclusion. In addition specific actions to protect women and girls from violence, exclusion and abuse will be crucial. Slum

upgrading and secure land tenure also need to be included as specific targets, as dec nt housing is a basic right for all human being. Local and Regional Governments are in a unique position to identify pockets of poverty and marginalized groups, and design specific programs. In support of this goal, provisions to eliminate all forms of discrimination (gender, age, caste, race, ethnic, religion, migrant, etc.), and achieve gender equality should be considered overarching principles to support this goal.

Environmental sustainability: exposure to unsafe waste, water, air pollution, the harmful effects of high population density, chemical and agricultural hazards and other environmental hazards are unequally distributed, disproportionately affecting poorer populations. Climate change is also affecting poorer parts of the world most severely, and it is the poor and disadvantaged who are particularly impacted; many developing countries are facing the "worst and first" effects of climate related disasters. Local and Regional Governments are one of the main drivers to cope with these challenges as, in many countries, they have direct responsibilities in water (resource protection, distribution), waste management (collection, treatment and recycling), in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting the use of renewable energy sources (e.g. through public transport and adequate building standards), or in supporting planning for land and urban management (reduce ecological footprints, urban sprawl, reforestation, etc.). As acknowledged in Rio +20, local participatory planning should be recognized as an "enabler" to adapt to climate change and to reduce the impact of increasing natural disasters and the related impact on human lives, infrastructure and economic activities.

Economic development: supporting and shaping more pro-poor oriented Local Economic Development policies and rules, including non-discriminatory practices to support youth, women, persons with disabilities and economic disadvantaged groups, both in terms of creating decent jobs, an enabling environment for economic activities (e.g. for the informal sector) and promoting innovative economic alternatives (e.g. urban agriculture) can also be catalyst for development, building on local solidarity networks, encouraging partnerships with civil society and the private sector.

Governance: national plans for poverty reduction should be articulated with local and regional plans and promote a better intergovernmental coordination and harmonization (multi-level governance). Specific support should be considered for local and regional governments to develop sustainable pro-poor policies and to ensure they have the means to deliver basic service (base on the principle of subsidiarity). As the level of government closer to the communities, a specific space in regional and local decision making processes should be promoted for civil society and private sector to play an active role in ensuring that actions and resources can be effectively targeted and optimally used to reach the poor and most marginalized groups, e.g. through participatory planning and budgeting (improved accountability). A broader participation in decision making processes is supportive of a more inclusive and sustainable development.

4. Implementation

The United Nations system should remain central in leading the efforts towards a coordinated and coherent definition of post-2015 agenda, as well as in the implementation of the new framework. The General Assembly is the most appropriate overarching body to provide guidance and promote coherence. The role of the United Nations and the agencies responsible for global coordination of the implementation and monitoring of the new framework should be enhanced through the constitution of a more robust Economic and Social Council, with a stronger, more institutionalized role for the Major Groups and stakeholders. However, in the shorter term, the "high level political forum" which resulted from the Rio+20 outcomes, can undertake the following tasks:

(a) Provide political leadership and recommendations;

(b) Provide a dynamic platform for regular dialogue and for stocktaking and agenda-setting;

(c) Follow up (monitoring) and review progress in the implementation of development agenda commitments, ensuring the transparency and accountability of the process, and the engagement of all stakeholders;

(d) Improve cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system on development programs and policies; and

(e) Promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level in order to make better use of their expertise.

Local authorities and other major groups support the creation of the high level political forum on sustainable development and call for an institution that builds on the strengths of the Commission on Sustainable Development while addressing its weaknesses, reporting directly to the General Assembly and the Council but not subsidiary to the Council. We also support a yearly two-week period for review and implementation, in addition to the hosting of a 2-3 day high-level segment of the Council. The forum must adopt and build on the Commission on Sustainable Development rules and procedures, including on Major Groups and other stakeholder participation as opposed to the more limited participation within both the Council and the General Assembly.

Partnership and coordination: the achievement of the development agenda will not be possible without the participation of all relevant stakeholders, through innovative multi-stakeholders partnerships and under differentiated modalities. These broad partnerships will require coordinated efforts at different levels (global, regional, national, sub-national) on the part of international institutions, states, local and regional authorities, parliamentarians, civil society organizations and the private sector, with a clarification of responsibilities (e.g. the implementation, monitoring and evaluation), and incentives to participate in the agenda.

This partnerships and coordination should be built within a clear global governance framework, ensuring a broader ownership and accountability. To contribute to this end, a building block on "governance" in the post-2015 agenda should include specific support to institutions and stakeholders at different levels.

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Statement submitted by Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

Presently we are at an important cross roads regarding the Millennium Development Goals. The main concern is how a program and a process can be sustainable and what can be altered towards sustainability. It may be more useful to exploit proven best practices that have not only obtained their goals, but were also sustainable in their strategic process to become role models for others.

It is well known that there are many different factors involved for an organization to remain sustainable. MAHAK has maintained its sustainability by taking care of the family, as well as the child stricken by cancer. For instance, evaluating the family's income, parental approach and acceptance towards the disease and most importantly moral support throughout the battle for all members of the family.

However, the main question still remains how to recognize the ideal non-governmental organizations and organizations that are role models for such potential blooming organizations? The latter can be through the selection of capable non-governmental organizations who have been pioneers and innovators. This could be undertaken through independent evaluator organizations and within a universally accepted framework of assessment. There are non-governmental organization benchmarking standards used by agencies, such as SGS, where operational capability of non-governmental organizations can be easily verified. The same could be undertaken for evaluation of sustainability of an non-governmental organization. The result should be directly connected to funding. The better the rating the more favorable the funding arrangements.

The fight against communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis, malaria and HIV serves as one example where successes in some areas can be juxtaposed and provide affirmative results. The reason is that not only governments but also, global organizations have worked alongside each other to control these diseases.

Also, Global Fund projects have been properly designed and monitored. This could be the case for non-communicable diseases, as follows:

(a) Proposing the establishment of a global fund and an independent global organization to carefully study and evaluate each non-communicable disease approach before and after it is implemented through result-based approaches and with the required funding programmed separately;

(b) Educational and research activities of successful non-governmental organizations can be identified in advance and addressed in project documents;

(c) Successful strategies should be recognized by evaluators and presented to the public by independent evaluators (nationally and internationally) for further studies, and new non-governmental organizations to use as project formats/models. Much of the required training should follow a standardized and uniform approach; and

(d) Properly funded simple solutions on the basis of clearly designed non-communicable disease projects within a public private partnership arrangement, where necessary infrastructures exists, should become priorities.

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Statement submitted by Make Mothers Matter, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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Statement

The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goal's proposal for sustainable development goals defines an exhaustive and ambitious post-2015 agenda, with "poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development" being the "overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development".

While the 2000 Millennium Development Goals had a relatively limited scope with 48 indicators, the 17 sustainable development goals include 169 targets, covering most, if not all, economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development. In other words, the ultimate objective of the post-2015 agenda is the wellbeing of both humanity and our planet.

In this context, business as usual is not an option. The gross domestic product-based economic growth model where businesses' main objective is to make profit, has clearly shown its limits when it comes to ensuring people's wellbeing and the sustainability of our natural environment.

Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals will therefore require a profound rethink of our economic model and the indicators used by governments to elaborate policies, i.e. it is urgent to move "beyond gross domestic product".

In her ground breaking book in the field of gender equality, "If Women counted", Marilyn Waring already pointed out back in 1988 some of the shortcomings of gross domestic product as a measure of wellbeing, progress or development:

(a) Unpaid family care work is unaccounted for in the current System of National Account and economic modelling although it is crucial for human wellbeing as well as for reproducing and sustaining humanity (this devaluating of care work, which is largely performed by women results in women being over-represented among the poor).

(b) Similarly, the production of products and services does not take into account the cost of using natural resources and their depletion.

(c) On the other hand, wars, pollution or natural disasters, to which we could add over-consumption, all generate gross domestic product growth, although definitely not contributing to human and environmental wellbeing.

Short term view and narrow reasoning based on efficiency, i.e. generating most output with the least possible input (e.g. natural resources at no cost; cheap labour, especially women's labour) — need to be replaced by a new economic model that prioritizes sufficiency and long term (intergenerational) human and environmental wellbeing and sustainability.

In particular, economic models should be improved in ways that incorporate care as a capital investment rather than a cost. Generally unpaid domestic and care work, which is indispensable for the functioning of any society, needs to be made visible in order to be adequately valued.

The post-2015 agenda and its sustainable development goals provide a timely opportunity for a total rethinking on "what counts", what we value, as well as what we do not value, in order to evaluate the priorities of an economy, that also integrates social and environmental aspects.

The shortcomings of gross domestic products have resulted in dozens of new indicators being proposed over the past years, but these primarily focus on outputs, such as rates of poverty, infant mortality, educational attainment, or environmental conditions (See for example, the United Nations Human Development Index, or the European Union's 2007 "Beyond Gross Domestic Product" conference that showcased various initiatives to measure "wellbeing").

The need to shift the emphasis from measuring economic production to measuring people's well-being in a context of sustainability was also one of the key recommendations of the "Stiglitz Commission", which was set up by in 2008 by M. Sarkozy, then President of France. The Commission proposed some improvements on the existing gross domestic products calculations (such as the inclusion of national resources depletion, or the inclusion of unpaid work), and suggested the use of additional social, environmental and sustainability indicators to better inform policy-making.

More recently in November 2014, the Center for Partnership Studies' Caring Economy Campaign launched the Social Wealth Economic Indicators, an interesting initiative that rather focuses on inputs, i.e. what is needed for better output, and that includes:

(a) Human Capacity Indicators, measuring a nation's present human capital, and

(b) Care Investment Indicators, measuring public and private investment in building and maintaining that human capital.

Make Mothers Matter therefore calls on Member States to seize the post-2015 opportunity to:

(a) Recognize that the current metrics centered on gross domestic products are inadequate, as they neither account for environmental costs and assets (natural capital), nor for the benefits of care work and investments in Human Capital.

(b) Move away from the current obsession of "economic growth", to an economic model that prioritizes the wellbeing of people and of the planet, with efficient resource use — not over-consumption, as well as investments in the future, notably through the valuation of care.

(c) Use such work as the Stiglitz Commission's report to improve gross domestic product as an economic indicator, and develop new complementary social and environmental indicators at the global level, that among others include a care investment indicator.

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Statement submitted by Christian Blind Mission, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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Please recycle

Statement

The theme for the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council is "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals: what it will take."

Persons with disabilities were absent from the Millennium Declaration and have remained so throughout the Millennium Development Goals processes. There is wide recognition that progress within the existing framework has not been equitable and that persons with disabilities are disproportionately represented among those left behind by recent development gains. The exclusion and invisibility of persons with disabilities in the Millennium Development Goals is indicative of how this development framework is not reaching the most marginalized populations and thus not fully inclusive.

Persons with disabilities have actively participated in the post-2015 development process with outcomes including 9 references in the "Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals," five references to persons with disabilities and two additional references to universal design in the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030" and four explicit disability indicators in the United Nations Statistical Commission indicator development draft document from March 18th. There is a growing understanding and acceptance for the need for disability disaggregated data and statistics in the post-2015 development framework among Member States. There is a need to continue to advocate for more measurable disability-specific indicators in the post-2015 indicator development framework on both technical and political levels to ensure that persons with disabilities are included in the implementation process.

To ensure inclusive and effective implementation of the post-2015 development agenda for all persons, the United Nations system must support an inclusive and sustainable process to reach all persons. To ensure inclusive participation in the implementation of the new agenda, the United Nations must support the work of governments, provide recommendations and identify gaps. Furthermore, efforts must be taken to strengthen interlinkages with the implementation and accountability of the post-2015 development framework and other global processes, mechanisms and commitments. Moreover, the post-2015 development agenda will only be realised through the achievement of existing internationally agreed human rights commitments, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

A truly inclusive society that leaves no one behind cannot be achieved without the global empowerment of persons with disabilities. In order to advance the rights of persons with disabilities and build a better world for all, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities must serve as a foundation to achieve a society, which values diversity, respects equality and realises the full potential of persons with disabilities.

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Statement submitted by Albert B. Sabin Vaccine Institute, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08613 (E) 180615

Please recycle

Statement

On behalf of the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases, an initiative of the Sabin Vaccine Institute, we submit this written statement to the Economic and Social Council to discuss neglected tropical diseases and "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals: what it will take".

Neglected Tropical Diseases represent a group of 17 infectious diseases and conditions afflicting more than 1 billion of the world's poorest people and threatening the health of millions more. These diseases perpetuate poverty and inequality by causing blindness, malnutrition, anaemia, and disfigurement, and by preventing children from attending school and keeping parents from working. Every year, Neglected Tropical Diseases kill at least 400,000 people.

Neglected Tropical Diseases were not mentioned in the Millennium Development Goals (only as "other diseases" under Millennium Development Goal 6) and now the opportunity exists for Member Nations in finalizing the new sustainable development goals to ensure Neglected Tropical Diseases receive the attention they deserve.

Treating Neglected Tropical Diseases is extremely cost-effective and contributes greatly to the success of broader development goals. Successful public-private partnerships with leading pharmaceutical companies have made treating Neglected Tropical Diseases extremely inexpensive, and several partners have already integrated Neglected Tropical Disease treatments into their education, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene programs.

We must look beyond the traditional way of thinking about Neglected Tropical Diseases and consider the broader health and security agenda. Ebola has taught us that weak health systems undermine a nation's ability to fight disease. Mosquitoes don't carry passports and vector-borne diseases like dengue fever and chikungunya can easily be transmitted across national borders. Since Neglected Tropical Diseases are primarily addressed at the community level, community-led efforts toward their elimination also serve as an early detection system for more deadly infections.

To effectively control and eliminate Neglected Tropical Diseases will require a coordinated global effort and finding the right set of indicators will be extremely important. An initial draft of indicators presented by the Statistical Commission prior to the 3rd post-2015 intergovernmental negotiation session (23-27 March 2015) failed to include indicators for Neglected Tropical Diseases. We see this omission as a great oversight, and urge the Inter-agency and Expert Group on sustainable development goals indicators, the Statistical Commission and Member States to insist on a global indicator for Neglected Tropical Diseases. The Neglected Tropical Disease community strongly recommends a 90% reduction in the number of people requiring prevention of Neglected Tropical Diseases by 2030.

Let's not allow the people suffering from Neglected Tropical Diseases to be marginalized once again. Those living in extreme poverty around the world are counting on our help.

E/2015/NGO/63

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Statement submitted by International Federation for Family Development, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08614 (E) 190615

Please recycle

Statement

The family is a unique and effective agent for sustainable social, economic and cultural development, and therefore, a strategic focus on the family offers a holistic approach to solving some of the most persistent development challenges such as poverty, inequality and social exclusion. In the transition of the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, adding the family as an active member helps for have real promoters of development and well-being for all, because the families involve diverse groups: children, women, parents, ...

Following the report of the Secretary-General A/70/61-E/2015/3, the family policies frequently target children and/or women individually and ignore the family unit as such. Additionally, policies claiming focus on vulnerable families regularly focus on a mother and a child, with little attention given to other family members, including the father or the grandparents. In other words, the long-standing efforts of United Nations to protect Human Rights has empowerment at its core and has been enriched during the past years with the goal of empowering the world's women and empowering the world's next generation — its youth.

The post-2015 development agenda could remove barriers to the active participation of families in society, especially decisions on investments in health, child poverty, education, population aging, domestic work and care, youth employment, and domestic violence.

In any case, 'mainstreaming' may not be the right concept, because families are already mainstreamed. They are part of every society in many ways. All societal issues relate to family and family needs, either directly or indirectly. You can mainstream a new perspective or a new approach, but not the natural and fundamental group unit of society, as the E/RES/2014/8 resolution mentioned.

As basic and essential building blocks of societies, families have a crucial role in social development. They bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialization of children as well as instilling values of citizenship and belonging in the society. Families provide material and non-material care and support to its members, from children to older persons or those suffering from illness, sheltering them from hardship to the maximum possible extent. The very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals. Thus, policies focusing on improving the well-being of families are certain to benefit development (A/66/62-E/2011/4).

Consequently, to most effectively reach the sustainable development goals, we are arguing that we will have to do a better job in leaving no family behind. To start with, there are four areas of relevance to the family noted by the General Assembly in resolution 64/133: confronting family poverty; promoting intergenerational solidarity; reconciling work and family life; and collecting national and regional data on family well-being.

In that spirit, we suggest in the following pages to add explicit mentions to the family in the following targets of the sustainable development goals included in the Open Working Group proposal (and the latest proposed revision, March 2015):

(a) Child Poverty. The new promising approach to child poverty is two-generation approaches. Instead of focusing in children and parents individually, a

family approach will be used that simultaneously provides high-quality programs for children and their parents.

(b) Population Ageing. Active ageing allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course so they can continue to contribute to their families; also, it is families that assume responsibility for providing adequate protection, security, and care to aging members when and as they need it.

(c) Healthy Lives. Research shows that a family-centred approach to health care can improve the quality of care and help curb rising costs, whether prevention or chronic care.

(d) Quality Education. When policies and programs are family-focused, they often are an efficient in-vestment of public resources for promoting youth school success and an effective means for achieving lifelong learning.

(e) Unpaid Domestic Work and Care. Household production constitutes an important aspect of economic activity and ignoring it may lead to incorrect inferences about the significant contributions this unpaid labour provides to national and global economies.

(f) Domestic Violence. Gender equality and gender stereotypes, like many other values and norms, are learned in the family and it is there where it should be first prevented and its effects ameliorated.

(g) Youth Unemployment. Our societies are unable of integrating young people, leading to situations which cause young people to stop looking for a job, to work in unsuitable conditions, and to delay starting a family of their own.

It is crucial that the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, analyse the social and economic contributions that families make to society through the time, effort and money families invest in their members — children, youth, the aging, and those who are unable to care for themselves. Because these contributions often are taken for granted, there are too few incentives or supports to families for the benefits they provide to society and too little discussion of political instruments to empower families. And this step designed to help families would in return also help those who are part of families — women, children, youth, and the ageing.

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Statement submitted by Association démocratique des femmes du Maroc, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

The Association démocratique des femmes du Maroc (ADFM) considers that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be adopted in September 2015 constitute a real advance over the Millennium Development Goals. Indeed, the SDGs lend much greater emphasis to gender issues: equality, non-discrimination and the fight against gender-based violence. They are important, moreover, because of the interest they will arouse and the mobilization they will produce, the data gathering in the field they will enable, and the substantial financing for sustainable development they will make possible.

However, the Association démocratique des femmes du Maroc does wish to draw the attention of the Economic and Social Council and the High Level Segment to the following four points which, in its opinion, are worrisome:

1 – Universality

States are not required to comply with international law, in particular with respect to indicators 5.4, relating to unpaid care and domestic work, and 5(a), relating to the enjoyment of equal rights to economic resources. These indicators maintain notions of conformity with "the national context" and "national laws". They should be revised so that the universality of rights is respected and achievement of the results set out in SDG 5 is not jeopardized.

2 – Consistency

We detect a certain lack of consistency. As an example, although SDGs 1 and 5 contain the same indicator—at 1.4 and 5.a, only the latter, relating to equality, is made subject to conformity with national laws.

Similarly, gender mainstreaming is not systematically reflected in all SDGs. Indeed, SDG 16 (Governance), for one, is silent on that point, particularly with regard to women's access to justice and the various elective offices.

3 – Effectiveness/efficiency

The SDGs' effectiveness and efficiency will be compromised by the fact that each country will set its own targets. This will prevent real gender equality from being achieved in the country and will perpetuate, or even worsen, the shortcomings in that area, since the achievement of gender equality is left to each country's discretion and good will.

The lack of effectiveness/efficiency will also have consequences for funding. Much fund raising will be required for the SDGs to be successfully implemented; but, absent any specific global targets, the aid given will not fight gender inequalities in the regions/countries that stand most in need of it.

4 - Accountability

As regards accountability, it is essential to provide a monitoring and evaluation mechanism, taking a participatory approach, for worldwide implementation of the SDGs. Furthermore, the involvement in this process of civil society organizations, including those that advocate for human rights and women's rights, is imperative, so that credible monitoring and evaluation can be done in the field on the impact the SDGs will have on populations.

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Statement submitted by Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfi, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

The Journalists and Writers Foundation (Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfi) is an Istanbul-based non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Since its establishment in 1994, the Foundation aims to promote peaceful coexistence through dialogue and understanding at global, regional and local levels. Through its projects and activities, it has brought together people from various backgrounds to discuss topics including but not limited to politics, religion, art, philosophy and science in order to establish common ground and, ultimately, peace.

The Women's Platform is one of the five platforms under the umbrella of the Foundation. The guiding principle of the Women's Platform is dialogue and peace building at local and global level. With a special focus on improving the role of women in creating democratic grounds for the resolution of problems, it works on disintegrated families, gender-based discrimination and humanitarian crises in various parts of the world, and for building and maintaining peace.

The draft of the United Nations post-2015 development agenda and the discussion of sustainable development goals emphasize women's role, both as a matter of human rights and for its impact on development. As women have become stronger, individually and collectively, our issues have moved closer to their proper place at the centre of global discussion, national action and community acceptance. Bit by bit, women's world is changing. Our objective in this statement is to develop a perspective, which uplifts women from the status of an object to that of a true subject, try and integrate fragmented points of views and develop a holistic, consistent and a strong approach.

Women continue to be the majority among people living in poverty and who suffer from hunger, illiteracy, dislocation, violence, poor nutrition and ill health. Women's rights are inseparable from men's and they are not optional. Protecting and promoting women's equality is a responsibility of every government. Human rights will only be respected and our societies will only flourish when governments deliver on that responsibility. However, countries and the international community have not yet succeeded in putting women's empowerment and gender equality at the top of the policy agenda.

The Foundation's advocacy is that gender is not a niche or a minority issue. Women represent half the world and as being fellow citizens they have the same human rights as men. Being a transnational non-government organization, the Foundation collaborates with various local civil society organizations to improve the status of women all over the world with a special emphasis on girls' education. Holding women back from being empowered holds the development in the entire country, and the entire world. Therefore, the post-2015 development agenda must truly focus on the wellbeing of women.

The Millennium Development Goals failed to address the outrageous crimes of gender-based violence, and how women suffer to access the basic needs such as education, food, housing, sanitation and water. One of the most critical lessons that the international community learned from the Millennium Development Goals is that the targets ignored the terrible burden of conflict on women. The goals neglected women's health issues beyond motherhood, the injustice of women's unpaid work in households and unequal pays in the labour force.

Gender equality and women's rights are key factors to address the unfinished mission of the Millennium Development Goals and accelerating global development beyond 2015. Gender equality matters in its own right as a prerequisite for the health and development of families and societies, and as a trigger of the economic growth. The post-2015 framework should retain a strong and stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment, and include gender-specific targets and indicators in the other goals.

Civil Society Organizations are the pioneers in promoting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and other global agreements. They play an important role in the formulation of policies on critical issues by bringing the voice of grassroots organizations and communities to United Nations decision-making bodies. They also act as advocates disseminating the views and information on the new targets and mobilizing support for their implementation.

Apart from being an advocate, Civil Society Organizations hold their governments responsible for the commitments in implementing the new agenda. Their specialized knowledge and understanding of local populations and regional issues often enable governments and United Nations programs to focus on how to close gaps in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and serve the most vulnerable groups. Civil Society Organizations cooperate with the United Nations and regional organizations through broader mobilization and campaigning work among the public — both nationally and internationally to accelerate this transition period.

Finally, broad public participation is a fundamental prerequisite to achieve the sustainable development, which integrates economic, social and environmental aspects as a foremost a bottom-up and multi-stakeholder process. It depends on active engagement of civil society groups to design and implement sustainable development projects with long-term needs and local conditions in mind.

The Foundation is very active in putting the gender sensitivity at the priority of the post-2015 development agenda. In this respect, Istanbul Summit is one of the most important initiatives of the Foundation. Istanbul Summit is an international, non-governmental, multi-sector forum, which aims to gather prominent women leaders and stakeholders from every quarter of the international community with a new topic each year. It aims to provide a setting for experience sharing among international stakeholders to exchange ideas and seek ways of cooperation to address contemporary global challenges in a gender sensitive manner. The main objective of the Istanbul Summit 2014, "Women's Perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda," was to ensure that women's perspective is adequately represented in the design, implementation and monitoring of the sustainable development goals.

Istanbul Summit urges that in the transition period from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, inclusiveness and human-based approach to development are the key factors. Within this framework, the Final Declaration of the Istanbul Summit 2014 outlined the general principle of the post-2015 development agenda and emphasized the role of civil society from women's perspective. It is also proposed in the declaration that gender equality before the law, in the workplace and at home is adopted as a stand-alone goal to be integrated into all other goals.

This year, the theme of the Istanbul Summit 2015 is "Women as the Beneficiaries and Actors of Humanitarian Action". Prominent women leaders will discuss the effects of mass displacements with a special focus on women. Believing that with the appropriate support, refugee women can improve their lives and the lives of their children, families and communities, Istanbul Summit 2015 aims to convey a strong message for the full participation of women in all decisions affecting their lives.

It is important that the policy suggestions of the civil society organizations are actually implemented in the developing countries. Besides contributing to the post-2015 development agenda by organizing international summits and participating in the Commission on the Status of Women's annual meetings, Foundation is also taking great initiatives to work on the ground with the aim of achieving the sustainable development goals.

At the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Foundation organized a side-event entitled "Girls' Education in Afghanistan: Achievements and Challenges". Experts discussed the achievements of the Afghan people in girls' education and the challenges of implementing education policies formulated by the national and international agencies. Diminishing the gender disparity in education, especially in primary and secondary levels, has been the major focus of the discussions.

Following up our panel and the field research in Afghanistan conducted by the Associate Professor, Ms. Semiha Topal from Fatih University in Turkey, we have established an Information Communication and Technology Lab in Afghanistan. Currently the lab serves to 300 girls. Besides science and math lessons, the volunteer teachers teach the students information technology skills. In this matter, the Foundation has collaborated with the United Nations Mission Donations Program to send over 100 computers to this lab to equip this educational institution with the latest technology to empower girls.

Raising the awareness of the importance that "gender sensitivity" plays in the new agenda is not enough by itself. The sustainable development goals should be supported with the action-oriented participation of the civil society organizations. In this manner, the Foundation proposes specific recommendations for the way forward to fulfil the demand of a gender sensitive agenda. The Foundation categorizes its suggestions under six main titles.

(a) Power of Institutionalizing Gender Equality: To encourage institutionalizing gender equality in the post-15 Agenda, we must utilize women's transformative roles in implementing sustainable reforms, mainstream women into governance and all levels of decision-making mechanisms and establish a monitoring/auditing mechanism to ensure gender legislation and policy is implemented.

(b) Political Empowerment of Women: We must urge local governments to create initiatives to encourage and advance women parliamentary candidates at all levels and mentor the new women parliamentarians. We should make political will visible in all types of policies and strategies. Civil society organizations should build capacity for inexperienced women coming into the positions of leadership and establish a gender budgeting program to ensure the accountability for expenditure on women.

(c) Inclusive Legislation Recognizing Women's Equal Rights: We should establish quotas and affirmative action to increase women's representation at all levels of decision-making and mandate political parties to 'normalize' women's involvement in politics by internal affirmative action policies at all levels of political party operations.

(d) Investing in Girls — Educational Parity: Local governments must ensure that girls have access to education and mentorship. Improving education quality for girls has a key influence on girls and women achieving gender equality and empowerment. However, in higher education, there is still poor participation and retention of girls and women, at both student and academic staff levels. We should advocate a recognized need for accountability, research and gender-disaggregated data.

(e) Promoting Women's Participation in Economic Growth: Empowering women can fundamentally transform the post-conflict economies and fight the trap of poverty. Therefore, governments must ensure that microeconomic loans provide enough support for women entrepreneurs. Women are mostly working in traditional roles. We should involve women's grassroots movements in all economic initiatives. Training courses including financial literacy training, access to financial services, business mentoring, and agribusiness are also strong methods of empowering women.

(f) Challenging Cultural Attitudes and Gender Stereotypes: Engaging men, especially male cultural and religious leaders at national and local levels, will have a transformative role in this matter. We should encourage our local communities to recognize the leadership role of women and resolve to promote gender equality to ensure their full and effective participation in sustainable development policies and programs.

(g) Without a doubt, sustainable development and a truly peaceful and harmonious society are all only possible when all talents including the skills of women are free to thrive. Peace and harmony among the society can only then be ensured when every fellow citizen's human rights are recognized. To achieve this, women themselves must have the possibility to have a direct active and decisive hand in the design of this new agenda for humanity. Without women's involvement in the decision-making processes of policies and programs, it will not be possible to establish a sustainable development and, ultimately sustainable peace.

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Statement submitted by Licht für die Welt — Christoffel Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08617 (E) 190615

Please recycle

Statement

Introduction

There are an estimated one billion persons living with disabilities across the globe, 80 per cent of them in developing countries. They face multiple barriers to participation in society: barriers to access to development programs, education, employment, health care, communication and transportation. Households with a disabled member are more likely to experience material hardship, including food insecurity, poor housing, lack of access to safe water and sanitation and inadequate access to health care.

The current Millennium Development Goals have failed to improve the livelihood of persons with disabilities. They are not mentioned in any of the 8 Goals, attendant 21 Targets or 60 Indicators. In the post-2015 agenda the inclusion of persons with disabilities has been recognized as central to achieving sustainable development.

The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals must ensure that the new framework is accessible for and inclusive of persons with disabilities, promoting their rights and full and effective participation. Below are some recommendations, which are also supported by the International Disability and Development Consortium of which Light for the World is a member.

1. Require all national plans, development strategies and/or mechanisms established to help implement the post-2015 development agenda to complement and support the national implementation and reporting requirements of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

2. Develop a clear financing framework and commit to mobilising sufficient public and private resources to meet the rights of persons with disabilities, and to 'leave no one behind'.

3. Ensure that accessibility is a key criterion in spending public and private resources. Public and private resources must be used in ways that always contribute to inclusion and ensure accessibility in order to ensure that no-one is left behind. Safeguards must be in place to ensure this.

4. Set indicators that incentivise disability-inclusive development and which disaggregate the impact of the post-2015 development agenda on persons with disabilities. To ensure that the sustainable development goals are inclusive of persons with disabilities and leave no one behind, the indicators that track progress should disaggregate data by disability and other social or economic groupings.

5. Last, but not least, an efficient transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals should ensure that the meaningful participation of persons is guaranteed in the design, implementation of policies, including fiscal ones. This means creating accessible, inclusive, transparent participatory processes.

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Statement submitted by Corporativa de Fundaciones, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

The sustainable development goals are based on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. At the same time, these goals are set out to address persistent issues and new challenges not covered by the previous Millennium Development Goals, which faced strong criticism for not sufficiently covering sustainability dimensions. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, the sustainable development goals present a more ambitious scope, built upon a remarkable consultation process that identified the needs and interests of the international community.

In Jalisco, the regional consultation led by the Mexican Government and the United Nations system 'Realizing the future we want for all in Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards a post-2015 development agenda' in 2013, set an important precedent for non-state actors, as it had the participation of over 400 Civil Society Organizations and other regional and local stakeholders in the definition of new global sustainable development policies.

The MY World Survey has been able to collect the priorities and needs of over 1 million citizen voices in Mexico, highly interested in a set of ambitious, real, transparent and achievable sustainable development goals. Mexico has been the most participative country in the survey, advocating that the new goals truly reflect the interest of the overall population.

The sustainable development goals present an opportunity for the international community to fully engage in the construction of a better world, as well as its need to focus on new partnerships, effective and efficient institutions, adequate transfer of resources, capacity-building, access to information and a strong reporting and monitoring system for accountability.

An emphasis should be placed into translating sustainable development agenda into national and local development plans, partnerships, reforms and socialization in order to harmonize local and national development activities with global efforts.

We believe that the active role of local governments, along with Civil Society Organizations, is crucial to the achievement of the sustainable development goals, especially through decentralized development cooperation and territorial approaches that ensure ownership, bottom-up actions, effectiveness and accountability processes.

We acknowledge effective institutions are critical to sustainable development policy implementation. Institutional reforms alone cannot drive a transformative development agenda without other essential inputs such as material and financial resources, leadership, human capital, political accountability, as well as the participation of non-state actors that recognize the concerns of communities and respond through coherent interventions. This requires ensuring a wider representation in decision-making processes for Civil Society Organizations at the global, regional and national levels.

We reaffirm our commitment to work hand in hand with the United Nations for a sustainable world. Furthermore, we call on High-level segment to facilitate the conditions and support States to achieve an open, transparent, accountable and functional sustainable development goals.

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Statement submitted by International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08619 (E) 190615

Please recycle

Statement

The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment is a global association of individuals and organizations concerned with the educational needs of children with visual impairment. We have special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and are a founding member of the United Nations Children's Fund non-governmental organization Committee on Children with Disabilities. We bring together educators, administrators, parents, and others to promote equal educational opportunity for the 19 million children under the age of 15 who have a visual impairment.

We believe that all children with vision impairment should:

(a) Participate in a full range of high quality educational services, from infancy through post-secondary;

(b) Be supported by teachers and other professionals who are properly trained;

(c) Receive appropriate educational materials in alternative formats at the same time as their classmates;

(d) Be taught with methodologies that reflect best practice;

(e) Live in an environment free of barriers, social stigmas, and stereotypes; and

(f) Lead productive lives according to their aspirations and capabilities.

We welcome this opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals. We are specifically concerned with sustainable development goal 4 (inclusive and equitable quality education; lifelong learning opportunities), but note that sustainable development goal 4 cannot be achieved without attention to all other sustainable development goals.

Accordingly, we offer the following recommendations to the Economic and Social Council and all non-governmental organizations to assure that the sustainable development goals are met:

(a) Recognize that achieving the sustainable development goals rests heavily on the education of all citizens, regardless of socioeconomic status, disability, gender, or any other indicator.

(b) Enforce the Marrakesh Treaty to facilitate access to published works.

(c) Distribute technology and assistive devices that support instruction.

(d) Train parents, inclusive and special classroom teachers, rehabilitation workers, and others who provide instruction to visually impaired children and youth, including those with multiple disabilities and deaf-blindness, in the alternative skills of blindness (e.g., braille, large print, digital technologies, orientation and mobility).

(e) Shift the public paradigm so that persons with disabilities are seen as capable individuals who are empowered in the struggle against all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

(f) Disaggregate data on economic and education indicators to reflect the impact on persons with disabilities.

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Statement submitted by Population Institute, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

According to the 2014 Millennium Development Goals report, progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals include improving access to drinking water and sanitation, reducing extreme poverty (defined as living on less than $1.25 per day) by half, and reducing child mortality by almost half between 1990 and 2010.

The sustainable development goals reflect the recognition that our societies can only progress if we take a multi-dimensional approach to development. Because climate change, energy, food, water, the environment and living standards are all interconnected, efforts to address one challenge often exacerbate other global challenges. We cannot solve these problems in isolation. Sustainable development, therefore, requires a proper balance between our economic activities and our ecological surroundings. It also requires investments in women's education and family planning programs to ensure that every child is wanted and has a fair opportunity to succeed.

Governments will need to manage their use of natural resources in a transparent and accountable manner to successfully transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals. Each country has a quantifiable supply of renewable resources (such as fresh water, arable land and forests) and non-renewable resources (such as fossil fuels, metals and minerals) within its sovereign territory. A country's demands for renewable and non-renewable resources, whether they are obtained locally or acquired through international trade, can likewise be measured. The only way to determine whether a country has adequate natural resources to sustain its economy and achieve its development aspirations is to compile a balance sheet that compares its demands with the available supply of natural resources. If the ratio of demand to supply exceeds 1.0, the demand for resources is unsustainable.

Countries that conduct a periodic assessment of their natural resources and develop strategies for bringing their resource consumption into balance with the available supply will acquire a competitive edge in the global economy and pave the way for a better future. Development policies that are aimed at addressing resource depletion and restoring a healthy environment also protect inter-generational equity. As the 1987 Brundtland Commission report warned, we must meet "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

A growing population will make it increasingly difficult to achieve the balance between consumption and conservation. As demands for food, water and other basic necessities escalate, there is also an increased risk of economic and political stability. By educating and empowering women, and giving them access to family planning services, we can strengthen families, fight poverty, preserve the environment, and help achieve a world population that can live in harmony with the planet.

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Statement submitted by World Federation for Mental Health, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

The World Federation for Mental Health has been a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1963. Our mission is the prevention of mental and emotional disorders, the proper treatment and care of those with such disorders, and the promotion of mental health and well-being.

Mental disorders, as a group, are one the leading causes of disability globally and are universal across all countries, often leading to social and economic inequality. More than 80% of people with mental disorders have little or no access to effective treatment or care. Suicide is growing as one of the leading cause of death across the world. Mental disorders also commonly co-occur with infectious and non-communicable diseases leading to greater risk of death and poorer outcomes. For success in meeting the goals of the sustainable development goals, mental disorders must by recognized. We assert that without specific and explicit commitments and targets that mental health will once again be forgotten and that too little attention and resources will be apportioned to treating mental disorders.

We fully support and commend the Open Working Group for its proposal to recognize the importance of including mental health in the sustainable development goal 3. We, along with our global partners, strongly urge the member states to make commitments to mental health through the revision in the sustainable development goal 3 and in targets 3.4 and 3.8 as proposed by the #FundaMentalSDG initiative as follows:

(a) Goal 3: "Ensure healthy lives and promote physical and mental health and well-being for all at all ages";

(b) Target 3.4 — "By 2030, reduce by one third preventable mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment in full accordance with the World Health Organization Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, and promote mental health and well-being in full accordance with the World Health Organization Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020";

(c) Target 3.8 — "Achieve universal health coverage for physical and mental disorders, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all."

It is imperative for people with mental illness and psychosocial disabilities to be recognized and to reaffirm that physical and mental health is a basic human right and at the heart of a people-centred, global approach to sustainable development.

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Statement submitted by Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Statement

The challenges are greater, especially because now there is an interest in universalizing the commitment, that is, all countries assume to achieve all the targets in their countries, but also contribute beyond their borders. Among the challenges, some are more critical and imply greater conflicts. First, poverty not only did not decrease, but it has increased in many countries in important population groups. Women, children and young people are among the most affected and those who evidenced more limitations to overcome poverty. It is evident that in the next 15 years, the effort should be greater to impact in this group. In this regard, in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is essential for women to overcome informal employment, the most common form and the one which is associated with domestic work. Therefore, it should be regulated under formal employment. Some countries started but it should be generalized and accelerated as requirement to contribute to decrease poverty among women.

Education, especially for girls, should achieve better quality standards and number of completed years. Education in girls is key to strengthen better income levels in their future working life and also to guarantee they have fewer children at an older age. In education, quality and number of years completed are key.

Lastly, maternal health, especially the decrease in maternal mortality is another great challenge that in Latin America and the Caribbean is key to improve and achieve the human development we aim at for all population. Maternal health is still weak and countries have high mortality rates that should be decreased by improving health services; guaranteeing access of adolescents to comprehensive sexuality education; providing modern contraceptive methods and diagnostic and HIV/AIDS prevention. These basic actions should be guaranteed and all countries must be helped out to cover them with genuine resources, as the financial transaction tax and other taxing that should be adopted. This does not exclude the commitment of richest countries to achieve 0,7% of their Gross Domestic Product devoted to international cooperation.

In order to achieve this, the priorities to reduce war expenses at country levels should be achieved. But this must be along with reforms in the tax system that reduces indirect taxes which affected more poor people. It is impossible that only one country changes this; there should be global consensus and commitment to reach a global change. Inequality of rights and the current economic, social and gender gaps can no longer persist if we aim at achieving sustainable development.